

MICHIGAN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PREVENTION & TREATMENT BOARD

Child & Family Services / Michigan Family Independence Agency

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**MICHIGAN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND
TREATMENT BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

April 3, 2001

Oakland County Courthouse
Law Library Conference Room
Pontiac, MI

***** APPROVED – July 10, 2001 *****

Attendance:

James A. Fink, Chair
Ferne Farber, DV Board
Shirley Mann Gray, DV Board
The Honorable Richard Halloran, DV Board
Michelle Hayes, DV Board
Catherine C. Lucas, DV Board
The Honorable Edward Sosnick, DV Board

Debi Cain, Executive Director
Celestine Colton, DV Staff
Sandy Cory, DV Staff
Penny Hackett-Evans, DV Staff
Carol Hackett Garagiola, DV Staff
Julie Lyons, DV Staff

Guests:

Kathy Hagenian, MCADSV
Hedy Nuriel, HAVEN
Jane O'Dell, Domestic Violence Sexual Assault Services
Mary Patterson, Safe Horizons
Jo Summitt, Shelterhouse – Branch County Coalition Against DV
Coleen Sootsman-Eicher, Oakland County Coordinating Council Against DV
Gwyn VanDevender, Human Development Commission
Jo Willson, Women's Aid Service

I. Meeting was called to order at 12:30 pm.

Introductions were made around the room. One new Executive Director was introduced: Jo Willson, Women's Aid Service in Mt. Pleasant; and one new Interim Executive Director, Jo Summitt, Shelterhouse – Branch Coalition Against Domestic Violence in Coldwater.

II. Board Consent

A. Approval of Agenda

B. Approval of Minutes: October 11, 2000 and February 7, 2001.

C. Add an agenda item to ratify all actions from October 1, 2000 to date.

MOTION: R. Halloran moved to approve the agenda; the minutes from October 11, 2000 and February 7, 2001; and ratifying all previous actions from October 1, 2000 to date. Seconded by S. Mann Gray. Motion carried.

III. General Reports:

A. Chair's Report:

J. Fink announced that F. Farber, R. Halloran, C. Lucas and he were reappointed by the Governor for another three-year term on the MDVPTB.

1. Governor's Domestic Violence Homicide Prevention Task Force:

The task force was appointed by the Governor and chaired by the Lt. Governor to look at changes in the systems focusing on homicide prevention. The task force report has been submitted containing approximately 30 recommendations.

D. Cain reported that the press conference is tentatively scheduled for April 19 at 10:30 a.m. in the Capitol Rotunda. The Governor will officially accept the report and comment to the press at that time. MDVPT board members are invited to participate in the press conference.

The report contains several recommendations to the Governor, many of which MDVPTB is responsible for implementing. Four major broad initiative areas include: education awareness and prevention, legislative initiatives, study areas around medical issues and batterers intervention, and streamlining funding and monitoring. Discussion ensued.

In support of the MDVPTB to make a strong stance in the state, R. Halloran recommended pursuing changing the board to an independent commission, making the board more independent from FIA.

D. Cain expressed thanks to the five counties who hosted various task force hearings: Oakland County, Wayne County Coordinating Council and Prosecutor's Office, Kalamazoo, Saginaw, and Ingham counties.

2. Legislative Reception:

The legislative reception was co-hosted by the Prosecuting Attorneys Association of Michigan (PAAM) and the MDVPTB in the Capitol Rotunda, March 6, 2001. The reception was well attended by at least 100 people including the Lt. Governor, several legislators, judges, and other state officials. Leslie Hagen of PAAM and C. Hackett Garagiola worked very hard to make the event a success.

3. **Coordinating Council Summit:** E. Sosnick reported on the first Coordinating Council Summit, which took place in Mt. Pleasant, March 16, 2001. Forty councils from over the state participated to share common problems and issues and recommend solutions. A report and comprehensive roster of coordinating councils will be generated as a result of the summit.
4. **Board Policy Review:** J. Fink led discussion concerning the annual review of the following policies:
 - a. Governance Commitment – no comments.
 - b. Chairperson's Role – J. Fink clarified that the chair consults with the executive director and is not the executive director's supervisor.
 - c. Board Committee Principles – eliminate paragraph # 6 "Until such time that the board's Ends policies are more developed, the board will continue to use existing committee structure."
 - d. Committee Structure – tabled until the May 9, 2001 board meeting.
 - e. Executive Director Role – no comments.
 - f. Delegation to the Executive Director - no comments.
 - g. Executive Director Job Description – no comments.

MOTION: Made by E. Sosnick to adopt the above policies as stated, amend the Board Committee Principles by eliminating paragraph #6, switch the words "title" and "category", and review the Committee Structure policy at the next board meeting. Seconded by C. Lucas. Motion carried.

3. Board Meeting Schedule/Mini Retreat:

The May 9, 2001, board meeting will begin at 12:00 noon, at the Kellogg Hotel and Conference Center, East Lansing, MI.

The Tuesday, July 10, 2001, board meeting will begin at 10:30 a.m., location TBA.

The September 20 – 21, 2001, board meeting/retreat is scheduled to take place at Waldenwoods, in Hartland, MI.

Discussion ensued regarding future board meeting schedule and sites. Possibilities included quarterly retreats enabling the board to focus more in depth on pertinent issues. The issue was tabled for the September board meeting/retreat. D. Cain will check the MDVPTB enabling legislation for boundaries.

IV. Monitoring to Assure Organizational Performance:

A. Executive Limitations:

- 1. Treatment of Staff:** D. Cain reported that Jane White's report will be available at the May board meeting. The December 7, 2000 Treatment of Staff report remains accurate.
- 2. Financial Condition:** C. Lucas questioned "All the expenditures have been consistent with the fiscal year's legislative appropriation." D. Cain will report at the May board meeting after checking language from prior board minutes.
- 3. Treatment of Consumers:** J. Fink reviewed #4 of the policy, "Fail to provide procedural safeguards for the transmission of information." Discussion ensued. The Governance Committee will review the Treatment of Consumers policy with L. Hermen and A. Armstrong and report back to the board.

MOTION: Made by C. Lucas to accept the reports of the Executive Director. Seconded by S. Mann Gray. Motion carried.

V. Executive Director's Report on Ends Development:

- A. STOP Grant Reduction:** D. Cain reported on this topic stating that MDVPTB took an 18% reduction which translates to \$774,000 in STOP grant money, effective October 1, 2001. This is on top of a \$265,000 cut taken in existing funds due to the Michigan census going down.

The MDVPTB is currently in the process of reducing the \$774,000 cut by renegotiating new contracts from \$250,000 to \$175,000 with our state partners: Prosecuting Attorneys Association of Michigan, Michigan Judicial Institute, and Michigan Commission on Law Enforcement Standards/Michigan State Police. Underwriting grantee attendance at the MCADSV's annual conference is also being reduced this year and cut completely starting next year.

Monies for MDVPTB staff may be shifted to the FIA state block grant money. D. Cain stated that they are currently renegotiating for contract analyst positions to remain in the federal MDVPTB budget, and all other positions be shifted to FIA block grant money. The process is 99% complete.

Some carry-forward monies left in surplus are available which should allow us to avoid cutting the direct service programs. MDVPTB has made some cuts to training contracts and the domestic violence office but not to any of the 48 direct service contracts. Discussion ensued. D. Cain will keep the board, staff, and shelters advised of news as it is available. D. Cain will be attending the STOP Grant Administrators Conference in Washington, DC, April 9 – 12.

B. Transitional Supportive Housing: D. Cain reported that “traditional” transitional housing is very different from the MDVPTB’s philosophy. “Traditional” transitional housing was originally developed for people with substance abuse problems, who are mentally ill, homeless, or coming from correctional or prison environments. The concept of transitioning people was based on the assumption that these people needed living skills to live independently. The transitional housing “traditional” models do not speak to the needs of domestic violence survivors. How the MDVPTB sets up its contracting, reporting systems, and RFPs reflects the whole concept of voluntary versus mandatory services.

D. Cain stated that program service requirements are currently being reviewed to more fully fill the needs of survivors. Critical thinking sessions on this issue are being scheduled with Barbara Hart’s staff. Ellen Pence may also be contacted to speak on autonomy as it relates to transitional housing. Discussion ensued.

C. Domestic Violence/Child Welfare: D. Cain reported on the domestic violence/child welfare connection and the concern when the mother is held responsible for children witnessing domestic violence rather than holding the perpetrator accountable. D. Cain flagged two issues for the board:

1. There continue to be problems with battered women being charged with failure to protect their children. Legislation may be introduced very shortly criminalizing failure to protect by expanding the definition of “omission.” The

implications for battered women could be horrendous given numbers of battered women who are already cited for failure to protect by Child Protective Services.

2. Concerns about enhancing penalties of children who witness domestic violence.

The board and guests discussed potential implications of enhancing penalties. Actual cases were cited by H. Nuriel, M. Patterson, and K. Hagenian. D. Cain urged the agency shelter directors to continue flagging cases for tracking purposes.

E. Sosnick encouraged the audience to contact legislators, educate them on the failure to protect subject, and become an ally for us to the House and Senate.

J. Fink and D. Cain will contact the Lt. Governor regarding this stance and will formulate a written position of the board if the legislation comes up before the next board meeting.

D. Work Plans: Justice Corrigan called D. Cain setting up a phone conversation to indicate that she is very interested in the area of domestic violence. She has met with R. Halloran and talked with E. Sosnick. A follow up letter and materials were sent to the Chief Justice pointing out that MJI has developed materials with STOP grant money and the Alternate Dispute Resolution packet (available in the May board packet) was developed by MDVPTB in collaboration with the State Court Administrator's Office (SCAO). Justice Corrigan would like all concerns flagged and directed to John Ferry at the SCAO.

D. Cain reported that the site monitoring work is being continued. The process has been a learning experience. The need for continuity and leadership in domestic violence programs has surfaced as being areas which require future attention. By the end of summer enough information will be gathered to begin to think about what it means and how to really use the information.

VI. Public Comment:

E. Sosnick reported that the Oakland County Coordinating Council sponsored a training on the Faith Based Community response attended by more than 100 participants.

VII. Process Evaluation:

M. Hayes added that, speaking from personal experience, victims of domestic violence need support, guidance, and the caring offered from counselors and child care providers rather than mandated services.

Board members were generally pleased with the results of the meeting. It is overwhelming the amount of the work that needs to be accomplished. Going to quarterly meetings

would allow the board to work more in depth on pertinent issues.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 3:05 p.m.

**MOTION: Made by E. Sosnick to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by M. Hayes.
Motion carried.**